It is normal to increase utilisation of capacity in a phased manner to gradually reach to 90 per cent in a few month's time. When the capacity utilisation is likely to cross 90 per cent expansion of existing exchanges is usually started.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Guidelines are available in the Department of Telecommunica tions to ensure optimum utilisation of the equipped capacity.

**Installation of bag de-dusting plants**

70. SHRI FARMESHWAR, KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION'S be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that Gov. eniment had planned to install bag de-dusting plants, to avoid dust in mail sorting and post offices;

(b) if so, what was the targets set Tor the Seventh and Eight Five Year Plans separately and what are the achievements, so far;

(e) if there is shortfall in the achievement of targets, the reasons therefor the remedial measures taken and the results thereof;

(d) the impact on the health of mail sorters and other employees of Post Offices due to non-installa-(ion of adequate number of hag-de-dusting Plants and the manner in which the affected employees have been compensated; and

(e) the responsibilities fixed for in_ adequate installation of such plants and action taken or proposed to bo taken against them?

THE MINISTER OP STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): fa) Yes. Sir.

(b) Fifty de-dusting plants were planned for installation during the seventh Five Year Plan. In the absence of indigenous technology on Indian Company was contracted after inviting tenders for procurement and supply of three prototype samples of bag de-dusting plants and these were installed at Bombay, Bangalore and Delhi respectively. Further development of the de-dusting equipmsnt however could not mate. rlialise because of the unsatisfactory maintenance of the three prototypes by the Company concerned which eventually gave rise to a dispute and the matter is presently subjudice.

No specific target in this regard has been set for the 8th Five Year Plan since this was to be formulated annually. For the year 1994-95_ about 16 locations have been identified for setting up such equipments.

(c) As per the agreement governing prodUrement of these equipments. the supplier was required to first develop prototype, carry out satisfactory maintenance of the equipment and progressively indigenous it by setting up manufacturing facility in the country, so that the Department could consider placing of bulk orders for the remaining equipments.

The shortfall during the Seventh Five Year Plan was due to the un satisfactory performance of the pro totype arising from poor maintenance support provided by the supplier. In the circumstances the Department did not place further orders for the remaining equipments planned.

Bag washing plant which regularly washes all bags used for transportation of mails have since been installed in seven locations in the country and these have been operating satisfactorily .

(d) In order to provide satisfactory work environment the Department has initiated various measures including installation of seven bag washing units in the country where bags are regularly washed. In addj:-

tion *nylon* bags and dousti bags which do not accumulate dust so easily have been introduced progressively in place of the jute bags.

(e) The plan for installing bag de-dusting plants in the country fell through because of the inability,, of the contracted Company to develop successful prototype which could provide the desired level of perfor mance.

**losses from Postal Services**

71. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state;

(a) whether it is a fact that the Department of Posts is incurring unit loss in most of its operations including from Registered letter/parcels, newspapers and periodicals etc-cepting on speed-post letters;

(b) if so, the details thereul for t"ie last two years and unit realisations from such operations vis-a-vis uaits costs; and

(c) the manner in which the total revenue deficit of the Department is ought to be contained, despite heavy operational losses from postal servi-ces?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICA-TIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes_ Sir.

(b) The details are given in the caclosed statement. (See below) .

(c) Efforts are continuously made to contain the working expenses by ai iopting strict economy measures aid expenditure control as also *by* s'mplification of procedures where ver possible.

Statement

*Cost and revenue of postal service (in deficit)*

(In paise per Unit)

| Services | 1992-93 | | | 1993-94 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Cost | Revenue | Deficit | Cost | Revenue | Deficit |
| Postcards . . . | 154.25 | 15.00 | 139.25 | 156.87 | 15.00 | 141.87 |
| Printed Cards . . . | 144.19 | 60.00 | 84.19 | 145.76 | 60.00 | 85.76 |
| Letter cards . . . | 156.50 | 75.00 | 81.50 | 160.93 | 75.00 | 85.93 |
| *Reg. Newspapers* | | | | | | |
| Single . . . . | 211.72 | 25.67 | 186.05 | 204.99 | 25.34 | 179.65 |
| Bundle . . . . | 277.53 | 45.11 | 232.42 | 263.21 | 46.36 | 216.85 |
| *Book Post* | | | | | | |
| B. pattern & S. packets | 223.25 | 178.93 | 49.32 | 220.06 | 207.19 | 12.87 |
| Printed Books . . | 294.20 | 151.71 | 142.49 | 277.79 | 155.64 | 122.15 |
| Other Pariodicals . . | 327.09 | 128.55 | 198.54 | 307.46 | 152.00 | 155.46 |
| Parcels . . . . | 2210.98 | 1701.69 | 509.29 | 1939.75 | 1646.25 | 293.50 |
| Registration . . | 1036.37 | 600.00 | 436.37 | 990.34 | 600.00 | 390.34 |
| Insurance . . . | 1375.86 | 1101.00 | 274.86 | 1336.02 | 1477.53 | 141.51 |
| Money Orders. . . | 1409.33 | 1096.78 | 312.55 | 1328.04 | 1167.63 | 160.41 |